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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

EXECUTIVE MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

EXECUTIVE MEMORANDUM No. 5

DATE 24 May 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PLANS)
DEPUTY DIRECTOR (INTELLIGENCE)
~~DEPUTY DIRECTOR (RESEARCH)~~
~~DEPUTY DIRECTOR (SUPPORT)~~
COMPTROLLER
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ER

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16 May 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: DCI Lunch with Mr. Gardner Cowles
Editor of Look Magazine

1. At lunch today with the Director and the undersigned, Mr. Cowles summarized impressions gained during his April visit to the Soviet Union. He also mentioned two or three points which arose during his stops at Bonn and Paris. Some of the highlights are summarized below.

Communist China

2. At a rather alcoholic luncheon given for Mr. Cowles by Adzhubei and attended by Soviet press officials, the Soviet participants advanced the hard Party line on most issues. However, when Mr. Cowles predicted that within ten or twenty years the U. S. and USSR would find themselves working closely together in order to cope with the problems of Asia, all of the Soviets smiled and nodded assent.

3. Mr. Cowles reported that Adzhubei had said emphatically that the Soviets could persuade the Chinese to subscribe to any disarmament agreement worked out between the USSR and the U. S.

4. Mr. Cowles has the overall impression that the Soviets very definitely aspire to becoming participating members of Western society. /The implication here was that the Soviets preferred to consider themselves Westerners rather than close relatives of the Chinese Communists.7

Germany

5. Mr. Cowles feels strongly that the Soviet leaders are still deeply concerned over West German resurgence, the possibility of German unity, and the possible dangers inherent in future German control over nuclear weapons. He says the Soviets apparently believe deeply that, given nuclear capabilities, the Germans would try to trigger aggression against the Soviet orbit regardless of the desires of the U. S.

EXECUTIVE REGISTRY FILE

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Disarmament

6. Mr. Cowles feels that the main problem on disarmament negotiations is a genuine Soviet concern over "espionage agents" roaming freely over Soviet territory.

Agriculture

7. Although Mr. Cowles was impressed with Soviet progress in a number of fields, such as housing construction, since his visit six years ago, he remarked on the sad plight of Soviet agriculture. He recalled that Khrushchev had spoken of a major increase in agricultural investment, but Cowles said that the real problem seemed to lie in incentives for individual agricultural workers, and especially in an increase in private plots. Mr. Cowles went on to say that any real improvement in the Soviet agricultural situation, especially the development of larger livestock herds, would take several years. He expressed the view that Khrushchev probably realized that the problem is not being solved satisfactorily under the present agricultural system, but for political reasons he is in no position to abandon it.

Khrushchev

8. Mr. Cowles was impressed with the fact that during the three-hour interview with Khrushchev there were no interruptions of any kind. He got the general impression that Khrushchev's position in the hierarchy is reasonably secure.

9. Mr. Cowles was struck by the fact that Khrushchev demonstrated keen personal interest in two particular subjects--agriculture, in which he considers himself an expert, and his own skill as a politician.

10. In commenting on the fact that Mr. Cowles was accompanied by his wife, Khrushchev remarked that, "I see you are not a Moslem--you have brought your wife. You and I are both Christians."

Exchange Program

11. Mr. Cowles said that a number of Soviet editors had expressed the feeling that the U. S. had placed undue restrictions on exchange visits by responsible journalists.

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12. Mr. Cowles said that a group of leading American editors, including a member of his own organization, were planning to visit the Soviet Union in early June and had been promised freedom to visit any locations they wished. Mr. Cowles said he would welcome suggestions and the Director said we would be happy to make some.

NATO Problems

13. During his visit in Paris, Mr. Cowles said he had gotten the impression that General Norstad was quite unhappy with DeGaulle.

14. Mr. Cowles wondered whether DeGaulle really understood nuclear warfare, and suggested that it might be useful to have one of his leading advisors, such as Joxe, come to the U. S. for thorough briefings regarding our current military capabilities. The Director remarked that the French had recently received fairly complete information on this subject from our Defense officials during the meeting in Athens.

15. Mr. Cowles said that he talked to Adenauer in Bonn the day before the leak to the press regarding details of the new U. S. proposals for a Berlin settlement. On that occasion Adenauer said to Mr. Cowles that he would not tell him the terms of the U. S. proposals because Cowles could "read them in the paper tomorrow". Mr. Cowles thus feels confident that the leak was deliberate, and was put out either by German officials or perhaps by the French Ambassador in Bonn.

16. Mr. Cowles recalled that a year or two ago when Look obtained an interview with Adenauer, Adenauer had originally said that the Oder-Neisse line was acceptable. Shortly thereafter, Adenauer insisted that this remark be deleted from the published version.

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Cuba

18. As I was driving Mr. Cowles to his hotel after lunch, he remarked that none of his Soviet hosts had pressed him on the question of Cuba, and he had gotten the general impression that they did not consider Cuba a major factor on the world scene.

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Chief, SR Division

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